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REFAC # 5632-79

18 October 1979

NOTE FOR: Mr. Clarke
Mr. Lehman ✓

FROM : Joe L. Zaring, NIO/WE

SUBJECT : Comments on Draft Reform of the NIO System

Mike -

1. Since I am convinced that the proposed reform of the NIO system is a mistake, I think I shall take advantage of your invitation to say so in writing. Attached are the comments I had prepared before the discussion this morning -- addressed to the concept of the reform, and thereafter, to its specific recommendations. They seem still valid to me.

2. Two other points occur. On Page 9, it is said that the production board and planning process will be used "to enforce the relative roles of the NIO and Office Directors." To the extent that this requires the Offices to include in their production programs their respective inputs to the national intelligence under the purview of the NIOs -- and to budget office resources accordingly -- this could be helpful. But the planning process that was initiated yesterday did not encourage much hope in that respect.

3. The other point is the confusion with regard to the nature of the drafting staff. Nothing in the disseminated program suggests that its members would have regional/substantive expertise -- they are described as generalist synthesizers -- but both of you referred to that possibility. If this is the case, then the arguments for not assigning them to the offices of the individual NIOs seem to me to carry very little weight, indeed. Or, if as also suggested, their location has not been definitely decided but we intend in the meantime to proceed to recruit the staffers, this is even more alarming. Very different people will be needed if it's one or the other.

JLZ
Joe L. Zaring

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Concept

1. Does not really address the sources of our problems:
 - the overall weakness of political analysis;
 - the reluctance, if not refusal, of the producing offices to accept their responsibility for making an input to national intelligence as identified by the NIOs, and
 - therefore, the offices' refusal to accept that NIOs must have some voice in the overall dedication of analytical resources;
 - the failure of the DCI to obtain from the other community components a commitment to support an interagency product.
2. Vastly underestimates, in my judgment, the difficulty of getting a quality, inter-disciplinary product with the present functional structure.
3. Purports to clarify the relationship between the NIOs and the Offices, but by failing to define key words, such as "advise", makes that relationship even more ambiguous.
4. Tasks the NIOs with responsibilities for policy support, but denies them a relationship to production assets that make it possible for them to carry out those responsibilities. It notes this problem simply as a "contradiction".
5. By setting up a staff of "generalist drafters" it has an erroneous view of what estimative analysis really requires.
6. It still leaves NIOs overworked by failing to understand the scope of such problems as simply keeping up with the traffic.
7. Since it is unwilling to draw the full implications of the NIO system on the one hand or the ONE system on the other, it is a hybrid with the disadvantages of both.

Specifics

1. Page 5: Is it possible for the NIO to carry out functions of supporting the DCI in the policy process and linking that process to production if he can only "advise" the DD/NFA on in-house production? (Does the recommendation mean the NIOs deal with the offices and analysts only through the DD/NFA? Would he conceptualize policy-related NFAC

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production? Would he have rights of review over such production? Who would be responsible for quality control?)

2. Page 5: Cannot long defer question of NIO/NITO relationships -- the two operate now in great confusion.

3. Page 6: (Recommendation 1) What is the role of the NIO when policy support calls for NFAC production?

(Recommendation 2) Can the NIOs communicate with the offices, and more particularly, their analysts? (What is the "other national intelligence" referred to? If it's supportive of the policy process, shouldn't the NIO have been involved from the beginning?)

4. Page 7: (Recommendation 3) What is encompassed in "advise"? Directly? Through whom? Include review?

(Recommendation 4) How does the NIO with one assistant have more time to think, get around town, and even keep up with the traffic?

(Para. B) The contradictions are real. What are the "ways" to reduce them?

5. Page 8: Take it that NIOs won't attend staff meetings?

(Para. D) How really serious is the problem of the "CIA representative"?

6. Page 9: (Recommendation 1) How does NIO "facilitate" inter-office cooperation? (Something short of management -- even if policy support?) Can NIOs decide what inputs each office should make? Does he review products and say another office should be brought in?

(Recommendation 2) Emphasis on "communication" seems to undercut the distinction being drawn. Who gets into the dialogue? Can NIO call in analysts from various offices and talk to them? Give them assignments based on an outline of the project?

(Recommendation 5) Wouldn't this undercut the NIOs responsibility as principal advisor to both DD/NFA and the DCI?

7. Page 10: When was the NIO ever "running" the Community in his substantive area?

(Para. 2) Having NIOs in production apparatus can also facilitate their non-production functions.

(Para. 3) Real problem here is the unwillingness of offices to

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subject their views to any kind of an opposing view or criticism.

(Para. 4) Real problem here was the absence of agreement on what an NIE should look like.

8. Page 11: (Para. 2) "Dead hand of coordination" is overdrawn. DCI says he wants opposing views identified.

9. Page 13: (Recommendation 1a) Wiring chart won't impress anyone.

10. Page 14: (Para. 2) NIOs have never lacked understanding of the interagency product -- it was the offices -- and the DCI. This is a priority that has to be made clear to them.

(Para. 4) Don't understand.

11. Page 15 - 16: Fail, generally, to see any advantages in collegiality that not available through cooperation -- when needed -- of relevant NIOs.

(Para. B2) How will NIOs w/o Portfolio specifically relate to interagency products? How would they inter-act with consultants?

12. Page 19: (Para. 3) "Incongruous" only under the new concept.

13. Page 23: (Para. A) It is not so much a drafting deficiency as an analytical one. (There are some regional senior analysts.)

14. Page 24: Problem is not -- even primarily -- one of a need for "generalist synthesizers". In many instances we simply lack quality analysts, or, if we have them they cannot be detailed to do lengthy projects.

15. Page 26 - 27: Concept of drafting staff seems to me a totally erroneous one from standpoint of skills required.

(Para. 3) How would senior officer "train" his staffers, especially in substantive skills required? More important, how would individual drafters relate to their supporting analysts in NFAC? What materials do they work from and with? If the staff merely massages what is provided by the Offices, how does this relieve the burden on the Offices -- or do so without once more irritating them? Does NFAC have ten really good people the Offices will release for rotation to staff?

16. Page 28 - 29: What substantive authority does the NIC Chairman have?

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